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OLD IMAGES FOR NEW TEXTS AND CONTEXTS:
WANDERING IMAGES IN ISLAMIC BOOK PAINTING

The main characteristic of the art of painting in the Islamic world—be it in a manuscript, in an album, or on a wall—is its dependence, directly or indirectly, on a textual or oral narrative. The most important sources for the thematic inspiration of Islamic painting have predominantly been the masterpieces of Persian literature. The iconographic canons of Islamic painting were founded on repeatedly copying core texts and freely circulating interrelated networks of images. On the one hand, the scenes, figures, settings, and symbols that were developed around these models provided artists with a repertory of ready-made images; on the other hand, they restricted artists in establishing new iconographic and stylistic interpretations. The possibility for images to "wander" through different texts and serve as visual markers largely depended on the artist's skills and his iconographical interpretation. I have discussed elsewhere how Muslim painters responded to well-known imagery to formulate their own archetypes and visually modify established ones.[1] In this essay, I will examine how some Ottoman painters used both earlier and contemporary images in highly innovative ways to invent their own paintings. Here, I will introduce another method of adoption of earlier images—the art of collage, both pictorial and literal. This method allowed the artist to transform the images developed for one narrative to illustrate another, or to actually cut out the images from one manuscript and paste them into a different one.

The first group consists of imagery inspired by both written and oral sources available to the painter that were modified into "new" representations. Although it is generally assumed that the subject matter of a book painting is understood by referring to the accompanying narrative, it is not always possible to decipher the theme of a painting or some of the iconographic details by merely reading the text. The rich iconographic themes and associations available to both the artist and the viewer is often no longer entirely clear as many visual codes have lost their direct or indirect meaning within the constant change in cultural references. One should, therefore, investigate other visual or textual sources that informed the collective memory of the painter.[2]

A lavishly illustrated copy of the *İskendernâme* of the Ottoman poet Ahmedî (d. 1413), which is now housed in Venice Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana (attributed to 1460–70, and to the Ottoman city of Edirne),[3] includes two paintings of the *miʿrāj*, or miraculous ascension to heaven, of the Prophet Muhammad. From the fourteenth century on, representations of the *miʿrāj* appear in several different literary texts. Except for small variations, the main iconographical scheme of these scenes hardly changes. In earlier examples, the Prophet's face is shown, while in later ones, it is replaced by a flaming halo and veil; in some instances, his whole body is shown as a holy light. He rides on his human-headed mule, Buraq, and is escorted by Archangel Gabriel, who leads the way. At times, the city of Mecca and the Kaʿba are depicted in the lower part of the painting.

One of the two depictions of the *miʿrāj* in the Venice *İskendernâme* follows the traditional model.[4] The other painting, however, introduces new details (fig. 1). In the painting, the sky is filled with angels, golden stars, and clouds, while the riderless Buraq stands in the center. With his finger in his mouth, a generic gesture of astonishment, the angel Gabriel gazes at the Prophet. At the upper left, the unveiled Prophet, standing in a halo of golden flame, is looking towards the right, where a hand set in golden light has appeared. In the text, the *miʿrāj* is mentioned twice, but none of the verses explain the meaning of the extended hand.

The possible narrative and pictorial sources for this unusual element can be traced to earlier and contemporary works. For instance, a sixteenth-century Turkish translation of *Maʿâricü'l-nubüvve* (Ascensions of Prophethood), written a century earlier by Muʿin of Herat, informs us about "the hand" and its possible meaning in the painting. According to the text, during the *miʿrāj*, when the Angel Gabriel leads the Prophet to safety

Fig. 1. *Mi'rāj* of the Prophet Muhammad. Ahmedî, *İskendernâme*. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Cod. or. 57, fol. 192a.

hand of God in flesh, Christian religious images could have served as a model for the Ottoman artist's curious iconographic addition. Although we cannot be certain if the artist had visited a church or seen a Christian illustrated manuscript first-hand, it is tempting to propose that Christian religious imagery was known among Muslims in the fifteenth century. This unusual representation of the Prophet's night journey attests to the availability of diverse visual and literary sources that formed the artist's visual memory. Moreover, he did not automatically translate the given text into picture, but his response to it was enriched by several pictorial and iconographic sources.

In another illustration from Ahmedî's *İskendernâme*, mentioned earlier, both the author and the painter adopt a previously established model. The main literary sources for Ahmedî constituted Iskandar's relatively short life-story in *Shāhnāma* of Firdawsi (d. 1020?), and the *Iskandarnāma*, the long *masnavī* of Nizami (d. 1209?). In the selection of themes and iconography, the illustrative programs of Ahmedî's *İskendernâme* also rely heavily on the models developed for both the Iskandar cycle in the *Shāhnāma* and Nizami's *Iskandarnāma*. For instance, in several chapters in Ahmedî's poem, İskender's feats of slaying gigantic dragons are narrated, in order to portray his extraordinary powers and intelligence. In one of these stories İskender, after conquering India, spends his time hosting courtly gatherings and enjoying the springtime. During one of the royal celebrations, an envoy from Sind arrives, complaining about a dragon that has inflicted great suffering on all the men and animals of his country. İskender accepts the envoy's invitation to Sind to save the people from their misery. After observing the creature's habits for a while, İskender constructs a wooden chariot with a thousand iron hooks coated with poison. He drinks the antidote for the poison on the hooks, enters the carriage, and drives toward the dragon, who attacks the oxen pulling the cart. At this moment, İskender slashes the dragon with his sword. The enraged creature now tries to attack the carriage itself, but the poisoned hooks penetrate his mouth and head. İskender dismounts and delivers the last, lethal wounds to the dragon, first with his sword and then with his arrow.[8] The painting in the Venice manuscript (fol. 90b) includes all the iconographic details of the text (fig. 2).

A similar event, accomplished by a different famed protagonist, Prince Isfandiyar, occurs in Firdawsi's *Shāhnāma*. Isfandiyar, the son of Shah Gushtasp, has to undergo seven dangerous ordeals on his way to the

in the *Sidretü'l-münteha* (Seventh Heaven), he departs, claiming that this is the last place he is allowed to enter, and that "if he goes forward a finger further, he would be burned." Following these words, the text relates that another angel extends his hand from a veil and takes in the Prophet.[5] Although the hand is not specifically mentioned, another Ottoman text, written by a contemporary of Ahmedî, refers to the angel helping the Prophet to the other side of a veil.[6] The artist's inclusion of this iconographic element must have been inspired by one of these texts or by the traditions from which they stemmed, which were familiar to the collective cultural memory. Ernst Grube has suggested that the source for the extended hand may have been early Christian and Byzantine paintings.[7] As it is almost certain that no Muslim painter would depict the

Fig. 2. İskender kills the dragon in Sind. Ahmedî, *İskendernâme*. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Cod. or. 57, fol. 90b.

Fig. 3. Isfandiyar kills the dragon. Firdawsi, *Shāhnāma*. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, H. 1509, fol. 213a.

Brazen Hold. His aim is to rescue his sisters, who have been imprisoned and held by the Turanian Arjasp. His third ordeal comprises slaying a vicious dragon. As with Ahmedî's İskender, the prince has a horse-pulled wooden carriage with swords protruding from its sides. When Isfandiyar meets the dragon, the monster tries to devour the entire chariot, but the blades stick in its throat. Weakened by loss of blood, the creature finally succumbs to Isfandiyar.[9] Ahmedî therefore appropriates Isfandiyar's attributes, with some minor modifications, for his own hero, İskender, to underline his courage and skill. Like the poet, the artist, probably working in Edirne, has drawn on the visual models developed for the Isfandiyar story in the *Shāhnāma*. When comparing the illustration in the Venice Ahmedî to one of the numerous representations of Isfandiyar's feat in the *Shāhnāma* (fig. 3), one can observe their shared iconography, even though the styles are quite different. Thus, both poet and artist appropriate a series of established literary and pictorial elements and transfer them to a different context, where they acquire new meanings and associations. Ahmedî's poem was composed both as an account of the legendary life story of İskender and as an encyclopedic compendium of medieval knowledge. In creating his narrative, the author/poet used several scientific texts available to him. One of the most important sources of his chapters on geographical, astrological, botanical, and other scientific fields was probably the *'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharā'ib al-mawjūdāt* (The Wonders of Creation and the Peculiarities of Existing Things) of Qazwini (1203–83). Ahmedî's exposure to Qazwini and other geographical texts must have played an important role in the stories in which the marvels
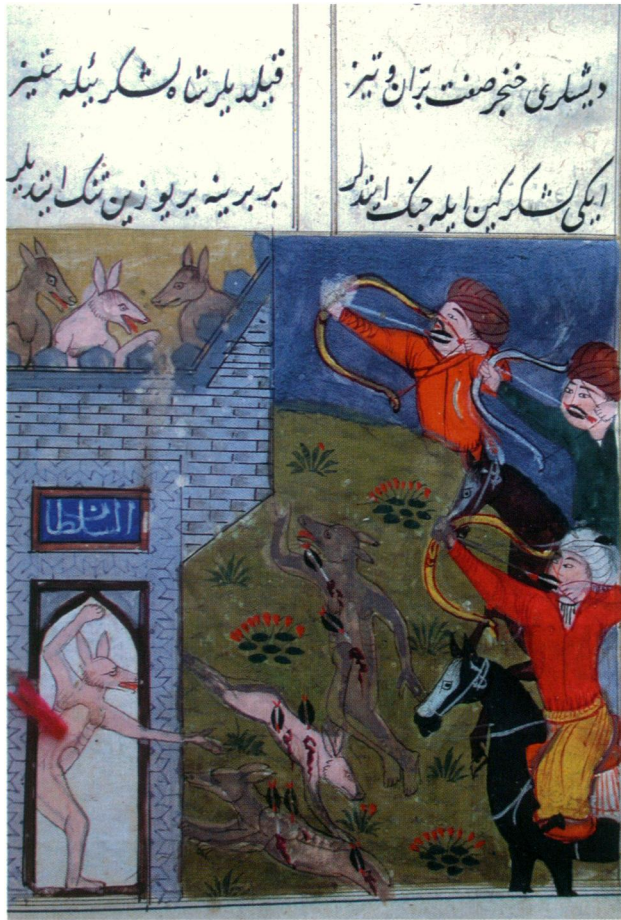
Fig. 4. İskender seizes the crystal castle guarded by dog-headed creatures. Ahmedî, *İskendernâme*, Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, H. 679, fol. 188b.

Fig. 5. Dog-headed inhabitant of Saksar Island. Qazwini, *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharāʾib al-mawjūdāt*. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, R. 1659, fol. 42b.

of creation take part as secondary characters. In fact, Ahmedî was not alone in using these anecdotes: even the earliest Greek Alexander romances contain tales in which Alexander encounters such marvels, who reside in exotic islands of the eastern seas.[10] Ahmedî's work continues to be a part of this intertextuality by describing İskender's adventures in these islands, which he usually conquers after confronting and fighting with the inhabitants. The strange physical features and habits of these foreign populations were already known to the poet and his audience through encyclopedic texts such as Qazwini's. This familiar body of literature also informed contemporary visual culture: like the author, the painter utilized these geographical and encyclopedic texts, at times repeating and replicating their illustrations, and at times adding new protagonists and motifs and adapting them to the new texts.

In one of the Ahmedî's stories about İskender, the hero is on an exotic Indian island, where he attempts to conquer a crystal castle guarded by creatures with human bodies and dog heads.[11] A painting in a copy of the *İskendernâme* dated to 1500 and attributed to Turkman Shiraz illustrates this anecdote (fig. 4).[12] The dog-headed inhabitants defending the magical castle are identical to the ones in a contemporary illustrated copy of Qazwini's *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt,* also from Shiraz (fig. 5). While identifying the original image is difficult (and not necessarily important for my purpose here), both of these images clearly originate from a common visual repertory.

Fig. 6. Soft-legged inhabitant of Saksar Island and the sailor. Qazwini, ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharāʾib al-mawjūdāt. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, R. 1659, fol. 48b.

Although Ahmedî does not give the name of the island where the dog-headed people live, Qazwini introduces them, through a sailor who informs the traveler Yaʿqub about them, as residents of Saksar Island in the Sea of Zanzibar. These wild creatures capture strangers and fatten them until they are ready to be devoured. Warned by an older captive, the sailor avoids eating and survives because he remains unappetizing to the creatures. He finally escapes by hiding under the trees, where the dog-headed people cannot reach him, and arrives in an area with different fruit trees inhabited by handsome creatures. One of them jumps on his shoulders, firmly locks his soft, boneless legs around the sailor's neck, and drives him like an animal from

one tree to another so that he may eat fruit. Even when blinded by a tree branch, the creature does not release the sailor, who finally escapes by making his captor drink an excessive amount of "grape juice," which loosens his legs.[13] Ahmedî also adopts the concept of the "soft legs" for one of the adventures of İskender: returning from Russia, the hero fights in Khorasan with an army of demons, and in the course of a violent battle, one of them jumps onto his shoulders, wraps his legs like a "strap of leather" around İskender's neck, and does not let him to move; İskender can neither speak nor recite the prayer invoking help. Finally, when the hero thinks he is doomed to fail, an angel descends from the heavens and releases him.[14]

The painting depicting İskender and the leather-strap-legged demon in the Venice İskendernâme recalls the Saksar Island native driving the sailor (fig. 6), except for İskender's horse (fig. 7). The iconographic similarity of the two illustrations suggests once more the existence of a common and established imagery, which must have guided artists illustrating different texts as to which scenes to depict and how to render them in the canonical iconographic mode. By adopting and recasting certain images according to the narration of the new text, artists transferred them from one manuscript to another and, more importantly, developed new versions of them.

The second group of images migrating from one text to another differs in terms of technique and methods of adaptation. Here, new images were created by literally pasting existing works into new contexts. The practice of assembling paintings and calligraphic works into an album has had a long tradition in the Islamic lands. Originating in Timurid Iran in the fifteenth century, the creation of albums—collections of separate folios, whether paintings or calligraphy, that were not integral parts of books or texts—had spread to Ottoman Turkey and become an important genre of artistic expression by the mid-sixteenth century. Although the examples I will discuss are related to this album tradition in terms of technique,[15] they are quite different in concept and intention: in these cases, the artist takes an earlier manuscript illustration or some element of it and pastes it into a different manuscript, either on its own or in combination with other cut-out images, to illustrate a new narrative.

The first examples of this technique are from the earliest extant illustrated copy of Ahmedî's İskendernâme, apparently the first illustrated manuscript produced for Ottoman patrons. Now in the Bibliothèque nationale

Fig. 7. Leather-strap-legged demon and İskender. Ahmedî, *İskendernâme*. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Cod. or. 57, fol. 179a.

Fig. 8. İskender goes to Rayic Island. Ahmedî, *İskendernâme*. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. or. turc 309, fol. 134b.

de France, it was completed in 1416, in the most important Ottoman provincial city of the age, Amasya.[16] Only three of its twenty-one illustrations are painted on the pages of the manuscript. To fill the spaces reserved for the other illustrations, the rest consist of pasted-on fragments put together to form a scene, with added plain colors and plant or floral decoration. One of these collage paintings (fol. 134b) depicts the arrival of İskender on Rayic Island in the Indian Ocean (fig. 8). In this composition, only the ships and the sea with fish are actually painted on the page; the figures have been cut from at least two different illustrated manuscripts typical of Inju and Jalayirid ateliers of the fourteenth century. The artist of the *İskendernâme* manuscript has

excised an enthronement scene, probably from either a copy of the *Shāhnāma* or one of the historical texts abundantly produced in both Shiraz and Baghdad during the fourteenth century. He has then pasted the image of the enthroned ruler flanked by his courtiers onto his own painting of the ship, and those of other figures available to him onto the other ships, thus transforming the scene into one depicting İskender and his courtiers exploring the Indian Ocean. In fact, the collage illustration relates directly to the verses above the painting, which explain İskender's curiosity

for marvels, and how his men worked day and night to construct the ships, and that when the ships were ready, he set off for his quest.[17]

Another painting (fol. 333a) from the same manuscript depicts the bier of İskender and the mourning of his death (fig. 9). According to the text, when İskender understands that his death is close, he writes a letter to his mother, Rukiya, to comfort her and to request that his coffin be taken to Egypt and buried. When his body is brought to his house in Egypt, Rukiya approaches his coffin, rests her head on it, and mourns for her son. Later, the sages recite laments for him.[18] The painting, which is in extremely damaged condition, has been assembled in accordance with the narrative. The setting was actually painted on the page by the artist of the *İskendernâme;* it shows a coffin in front of a niche with two candlesticks and a lamp, all drawn horizontally. A figure of a woman is pasted diagonally on the coffin, to represent Rukiya leaning over it. The "grieving" men and women consist of seated figures cut from other manuscripts. In order to lend the painting a sense of visual uniformity, the ground of both the original painting and the pasted fragments is covered with a single color.

Another Ottoman manuscript, a three-volume prose translation of the *Shāhnāma* of Firdawsi now in Istanbul University Library, includes illustrations created in the same manner.[19] The text is not a literal translation of the *Shāhnāma* and comprises several abbreviations and interpolations.[20] According to the colophon at the end of the first volume (fol. 569a), it was copied in Ramadan 1187 (November 1773) by Seyyid Derviş Mustafa. For its illustrations, paintings in various styles were taken from at least ten manuscripts of different texts, including the Persian *Shāhnāma* and its Turkish translations. Considered thematically appropriate for the new volume, most of these paintings were used without any change, or with minor additions in accordance with the text.

A late-sixteenth or early-seventeenth-century Safavid painting of a royal reception scene portrays an enthroned ruler conversing with courtiers. It is reused to illustrate a specific enthronement scene, with only slight modification: a veil introduced to hide the face of the figure sitting on the throne (fig. 10). The Turkish text claims that the ruler Bahman has died leaving no heir to the throne except his pregnant wife. His viziers and noblemen decide to enthrone Bahman's wife Humay until she gives birth to the future ruler. Humay sits on the throne "with a veil on her face" and

Fig. 9. Mourning at the bier of İskender. Ahmedî, *İskendernâme.* Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. or. turc 309, fol. 333a.

gives robes of honor to the nobles, who recognize her as their ruler and celebrate her enthronement.[21] The painting, originally representing a male, is therefore transformed into an illustration of the female ruler Humay.

Some of the illustrations in the manuscript were created by reusing not whole paintings but fragments, which were repainted and assembled like a collage. An image in the third volume, for instance, consists of three different pieces and some overpainting. The exact subject matter of this "new" painting is not easily decipherable from its accompanying text (fig. 11). It

Fig. 10. Humay sits on the Iranian throne. *Tercüme-i Şehnâme-i Firdevsî*. Istanbul University Library, T. 6133, fol. 728b.

Fig. 11. Faramarz tries to convince Hum to go with him to the encampment of Rustam. *Tercüme-i Şehnâme-i Firdevsî*. Istanbul University Library, T. 6133, fol. 594a.

represents the meeting of Faramarz and the sage-hero Hum. The text relates how Faramarz, Rustam's son, tries to convince Hum to go with him to Rustam's encampment before Afrasiyab (the Turanian ruler) and his army arrive. The devout Hum refuses and insists on staying at his place of worship, awaiting the enemy. Faramarz sets off to meet his father and Kay Khusraw and urge them to wage war against Afrasiyab.[22] A major part of the illustration, at the left, is probably from a historical Ottoman manuscript of the second part of the sixteenth century; it shows a person kneeling in front of a polygonal building with a cupola over a high drum. Three palm trees rise behind the structure. Two young attendants stand behind the kneeling figure, and two more men wait at the other side of the building. In its new context, the building, which originally probably represented a mausoleum, has been recast as Hum's shrine. This main part of the illustration is accompanied by two smaller painted fragments on the right side, one overlapping the other. The lower piece, which relates stylistically to the main part on the left, depicts a horse with three attendants and a groom. The upper one, too fragmentary to be identifiable, shows parts of a man, a horse, and some tents in front of a hill, above which the artist has added two storks. A figure representing the protagonist Faramarz is pasted onto the center front. His face and the details of his armor are repainted, and a big feather is added to his helmet to provide him with an impressive appearance in tune with his heroic character in the narrative. In fact, this refurbished attire is used throughout the manuscript to transform ordinary figures into the celebrated heroes of the *Shāhnāma*. The added dark green ground, extending from where Faramarz stands to the right-hand edge of the painting and roughly matching the original green ground to the left, joins and unifies the two parts. On the left, the artist has also added a third palm tree and a second cypress to enlarge the main fragment to fit the space left for the illustration. Another curious addition here and in other paintings of the manuscript is the modification of the turbans of the figures. Especially when the artist reuses Ottoman paintings, he carefully paints over the caps around which the turbans are wrapped, transforming them into longer batons (like the ones worn in Safavid Iran), considered more accurate for the Iranian characters of the *Shāhnāma*.

A further example of how cut-out images circulated amongst Ottoman manuscripts is evident in another eighteenth-century work, again a Persian classic trans-

Fig. 12. Ibn Selam's envoy at the camp of Layla's tribe. *Tercüme-i Hamse-i Nizamî*. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, H. 1115, fol. 144a.

lated into Turkish. The *Tercüme-i Hamse-i Nizamî* was copied in 1197 (1783),[23] but unfortunately the translator's name is not given in the text. The paintings are taken from at least seven or eight Iranian and Ottoman manuscripts; some have been only slightly altered, by expanding them to fit the space reserved for the painting. At times, images are used "as is," without any additions, but they are altered in their context: a princely figure on a hunt is transformed into Shirin hunting, disguised as a man (fol. 109b), and a school interior in a sixteenth-century Ottoman painting becomes a scene of Layla and Majnun at school (fol. 137a).

Another scene, originally depicting Yusuf being sold

to an old woman, has been modified to represent the envoy of Ibn Selam demanding the hand of Layla for his master, complementing the accompanying text (fig. 12). Probably originally part of a copy of Jami's *Haft Awrang*, the reconfigured painting has become an illustration of a completely different story. To disguise the flaming halo of Yusuf, the area around the prophet's head has been overpainted in light purple, roughly matching the original color of the ground. Added tents scattered about the scene suggest the nomadic encampment where the event took place.

The last example, from the same eighteenth-century Ottoman manuscript, consists of two fragments of paintings with different provenances, one of which has been enlarged at the top. The illustration depicts Khusraw listening to Shapur's description of Princess Shirin (fig. 13). According to the text, when Khusraw's

Fig. 13. Khusraw listens to Shapur's description of Shirin. *Tercüme-i Hamse-i Nizamî*. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, H. 1115, fol. 112b.

father wrongly suspected his son of plotting against him to seize the throne, Khusraw fled Iran, unaware that Shirin was on her way to meet him there. During Khusraw's stay in Armenia, Queen Mihin Banu held many royal receptions for the prince. During one, in which musicians and dancers entertained and cup-bearers distributed wine in goblets of gold and silver, Shapur told Khusraw the story of Shirin: how she had fallen in love with his portrait, which Shapur had painted and shown to her, and how she had left for Iran to meet him. Residing in one of Khusraw's splendid palaces, she was suffering from loneliness and was saddened that she had failed to recognize the prince when their paths crossed. When Khusraw heard this story, he ordered Shapur to go to Iran and bring her back.[24] The fragment pasted onto the left part of the painting is from a sixteenth-century manuscript from Shiraz and depicts figures dancing in an interior. Although they resemble Sufis in a trance rather than dancers at a royal gathering, the artist must have deemed the image appropriate, since the text mentions dancers and musicians. The fragment on the right can be attributed on stylistic grounds to a late-fifteenth-century Shirazi manuscript. It shows a young enthroned ruler and an elderly figure talking to him, who must represent Khusraw and Shapur. The faces of the young attendants have been retouched and the baldachin throne probably added by the artist-refurbisher of the composition. Since the event takes place during the wintertime, the ground has been covered with a dark color to indicate the season.

This survey of "new" paintings created out of migrating images demonstrates that the dependency on canonical and trans-cultural imagery hardly prevented artists from interpreting illustrations from a different and personal perspective. Existing illustrations were used in a variety of innovative ways and integrated both physically and conceptually into new compositions. As the first group of examples illustrate, they became constituents of the artist's visual memory and enriched his iconographic interpretations. The second group of examples shows how the paintings themselves, both in their entirety and as fragments, were used in new contexts. Islamic artists used these two methods to produce "new" images according to their contextual objectives and in accordance with the textual narrative. Judging by the examples at hand, the first technique—the adoption of certain visual codes or images belonging to an intertextual and intervisual network of common memory—was a wider phenomenon, whereas the sec-

ond technique—the actual cutting-and-pasting of different fragments to create pictorial collages—seems to have been used exclusively by Ottoman artists. Interestingly, this method was not current in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when artists of the court and of urban ateliers were producing large numbers of illustrated manuscripts, ranging in topic from historical and literary to scientific works. Most likely, one of the main reasons for the artists' use of old images in the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries was the lack of an established tradition of deluxe book production.

The migration of images by these methods created visual forms to be copied and refashioned in accord with new texts and new contexts to be illustrated, a phenomenon that deserves to be evaluated as a special form of creative activity overcoming the visible constraints on artistic expression.

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NOTES

1. Serpil Bağcı, "From Translated Word to Translated Image: The Illustrated *Şehnâme-i Türkî* Copies," *Muqarnas* 17 (2000): 162–76.
2. For this kind of discussion, see Deborah Klimburgh-Salter, "A Sufi Theme in Persian Painting: The Divan of Sultan Ahmed Ğalair in the Freer Gallery of Art," *Kunst des Orients* 2 (1977): 43–84; Serpil Bağcı, "A New Theme of the Shirazi Frontispiece Miniatures: The *Dīvān* of Solomon," *Muqarnas* 12 (1995): 101–11.
3. Cod. or. 57. For the manuscript and its paintings, see Ernst J. Grube, "The Date of the Venice Iskandar-nama," in *Ars Turcica: Akten des VI. Internationalen Kongresses für türkische Kunst. München von 3. bis 7 Sept. 1979*, 3 vols. (München, 1987), vol. 2, pp. 536–39; Ernst J. Grube, "The Date of the Venice Iskandar-nama," *Islamic Art* 2 (1987): 187–202; Serpil Bağcı, "Minyatürlü Ahmedî İskendernâmeleri: ikonografik bir deneme," PhD diss., Ankara, Hacettepe Univ., 1989.
4. Fol. 12a. This rich *miʿrāj* scene, painted with precious pigments, follows fifteenth-century Timurid and Turkman models in its depiction of the Kaʿba and the city of Mecca, Muhammad riding Buraq, and the sky filled with golden clouds and several angels. For a reproduction, see Ernst Grube, "A Unique Turkish Painting of the Fifteenth Century," in E. Grube, *Studies in Islamic Painting* (London, 1995), fig. 2.
5. *Delâ'il-i nübüvvet-i Muhammedî ve Şemâ'il-i Fütüvvet-i Ahmedî*, transl. Muhammed b. Muhammed eş-şehîr be-Altıparmak. I am grateful to Gönül Tekin for drawing my attention to this text and letting me consult the manuscript in Gönül and Şinasi Tekin's private library.
6. The *Halilnâme* of Abdülvâsi Çelebi, a verse account of the life of Abraham, dedicated to Sultan Mehmed I (r. 1413–21), includes a lengthy narration of the *miʿrāj* of Muhammad, where a similar event is mentioned. *Halilnâme: Abdülvasi Çelebi*, ed.

7. A. Güldaş (Ankara, 1996), p. 453. Grube, "A Unique Turkish Painting," p. 191
8. İsmail Ünver, *Ahmedî: İskender-nâme: inceleme-tıpkıbasım* (Ankara, 1983), ll. 3105–52.
9. A. George Warner and Edmond Warner, trans., *The Shāhnāma of Firdausi*, 9 vols. (London, 1910), vol. 5, pp. 125–27.
10. Rudolf Wittkower, *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols* (London, 1977), pp. 45–77.
11. For the text, see Ünver, *İskender-nâme*, ll. 3507–34.
12. Topkapı Palace Library, H. 679, fol. 188b.
13. Zakariyya al-Qazwīnī, *ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharāʾib al-mawjūdāt*, ed. F. Saʿd (Beirut, 1977), pp. 173–74. I am grateful to Dr. Ayman El-Desouky for his help with the Arabic text. The same adventure was also narrated in the *Arabian Nights*, this time attached to Sinbad the Sailor (Richard F. Burton, *Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments: Now Entituled The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, 12 vols. [London, 1885], vol. 5, pp. 50–53) attesting to the fact that Qazwini was not the only source that could have been used by the poet. However, concerning the visual vocabulary, one should consider the lavish production of illustrated copies of the Arabic and Persian *ʿAjāʾib*, which would have been much more available to the painter's memory.
14. Ünver, *İskender-nâme*, ll. 4181–4207.
15. *Vassali* and *fassali* were the terms defining two techniques practiced by Muslim artists of the book. The first was used for rearranging papers on a new page, the other for setting margins in a manuscript or an album. See Yves Porter, *Painters, Paintings, and Books: An Essay on Indo-Persian Technical Literature, 12–19th Centuries*, trans. S. Butani (New Delhi, 1994), pp. 118–19.
16. Ms. or. turc 309. For the manuscript and its illustrations, see Ivan Stchoukine, *La peinture turque d'après les manuscrits illustrés, I: De Suleyman Ier à Osman II, 1520–1692* (Paris, 1966), pp. 45–46; Esin Atıl, "Ottoman Miniature Painting under Sultan Mehmed II," *Ars Orientalis* 9 (1973), pp. 106–7; Ernst J. Grube, "Notes on Ottoman Painting in the 15th Century," *Essays in Islamic Art and Architecture in Honor of Katharina Otto-Dorn*, ed. Abbas Daneshvari (Malibu, 1981), pp. 52–53; Francis Richard, *Splendeurs persanes: manuscrits du XIIe au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1997), p. 47.
17. Ünver, *İskender-nâme*, ll. 3243–48.
18. Ünver, *İskender-nâme*, ll. 8625–40.
19. T. 6131, T. 6132, T. 6133. Ivan Stchoukine and Fehmi Edhem, *Manuscrits orientaux illustrés de la Bibliothèque de l'Université d'Istanbul* (Paris, 1933), p. 24
20. The Istanbul University Library has been closed since the earthquake of August 17, 1999. From that unfortunate day on, not even microfilms of manuscripts have been available. Therefore I was unable to reexamine the volumes, and I cannot give comprehensive information on the content of the text. I rely on the notes I took at the library several years ago, realizing that they are hardly sufficient for a thorough insight into the text of the manuscript, which deserves a detailed study.
21. In Firdawsi's *Shāhnāma*, Bahman (the son of Isfandiyar) is dying because of an illness, and although he has a son (Sasan), he appoints his daughter and wife, Humay, with whom he is passionately in love, as his legal heir. Humay, who is pregnant, ascends to the throne and, being a powerful

and ambitious sovereign, continues to rule even after she gives birth to Bahman's son, the future Shah Darab. She lays her baby boy in an ark made by the most skillful carpenter of Iran and sends it off in a river (Warner and Warner, *Shahnama of Firdausi*, vol. 5, pp. 290–96). The story differs in several details in the Istanbul University *Tercüme-i Şehnâme*: Azer (Bahman's brother?) kills Bahman together with a dragon and sends his body to Iran. Since Bahman does not have a son to succeed him, the nobles choose his pregnant wife as their ruler. The translator adds, with reference to "some traditions," that Bahman was married to his own daughter, which was allowed by the "Pahlavi" religion. The veil worn by Humay seems to be one of several Ottoman additions. The rest of the story, however, parallels the original *Shāhnāma* (T. 6133, fol. 728b).

22. T. 6133, fol. 594a. The story of Faramarz and Hum in the Turkish *Tercüme-i Şehnâme* is markedly different from that in Firdawsi's original. Hum plays an important role in the exe-cution of Afrasiyab in the *Shāhnāma*, where he is introduced as a sage living on a mountain who coincidentally finds Afrasi-yab in a cave and captures him. Unlike Firdawsi, the "transla-tor" of the Turkish version puts specific emphasis on Faramarz here and in several other episodes, which suggests the influ-ence of a *Farāmarznāma* text. Cf. Warner and Warner, *Shah-nama of Firdausi*, vol. 4, pp. 259–69.

23. Topkapı Palace Library, H. 1115. Another volume of the *Ter-cüme-i Hamse-i Nizamî* in a private collection features similar calligraphy. It was published by Géza Fehérvári in "An Illus-trated Turkish Khamsa of Nizâmî," in *Fifth International Con-gress of Turkish Art*, ed. G. Fehér (Budapest, 1978), pp. 323–37. Unfortunately, it is not noted if the paintings are original or pasted. However, one of the paintings in particular (fig. 8 in Fehérvári's article) seems to be a collage of two fragments.

24. *Tercüme-i Hamse-i Nizamî*, Topkapı Palace Library, H. 1115, fol. 112, a and b.